(b) Does not arise

Social Security for senior citizens in the country

568. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the All India Central Committee of Pensioner's Association has urged Government for formulation of the National pension policy to ensure social security for senior citizens in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to bring a legislation or propose to replace the Pension Act, 1871 by a Pension-cum-Social Security Act to reflect the pension policy for India; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) At present there is no proposal to replace the Pension Act, 1871.

Shifting of head office of south eastern Railways from Calcutta to Bhubaneswar

569. SHRI KAHNU CHARAN LENKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Government of Orissa has requested the Central Government to shift the Head Office of South-Eastern Railways from Calcutta to Bhubaneswar;

whether Government have examined the said proposal, and

(c) if so, by when the said Head Office is likely to be shifted?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Keeping in view the administrative and operational requirements, likely dislocation to a large number of staff and severe financial constraints, there is no proposal under consideration of the Government at present to shift the Headquarters of South Eastern Railway from Calcutta.

Non-availability of essential commodities in Himachal Pradesh

570. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any report about the grim situation in tribal areas of Himachal Pradesh due to non-availability of essential commodities, including foodgrains, edible oil, pulses, salt etc; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this connection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Functioning of Alarm chains in Trains

571. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the alarm chains hardly function in most of the trains; and

(b) whether it is a fact that alarm chain was not functioning in the ill-fated 383 Up Mokameh-Arrah shuttle train which had a fire recently?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) In some nominated trains Alarm chains have been blanked off to avoid is misuse.

(b) Alarm chain in 383 Up MOKAMEH-ARRAH Shuttle train has been blanked off due to misuse by miscreants.

Purchase of Forest Produce by TRIFED

572. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) which minor forest produces would be purchased by Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation to remove exploitation of the tribals by middlemen during the current financial year;

(b) what is the amount likely to be spent on these purchases; and

(c) on what basis the TRIFED choose the products for price support and market intervention?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) During the current financial year, Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) has planned to undertake procurement of Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) listed in the statement. (*See* below) This will be done with the help of the State Tribal Development Corporations & Forest Development Corporations. The objective is to pay remunerative prices to the Tribals and remove exploitation of the tribals by middlemen. Apart from these, TRIFED is also geared to undertake procurement of other MFP items either identified by TRIFED on its own or by the State Level Tribal Federations based on the market conditions and economic viabilities.

(b) TRIFED has tentatively planned to invest an amount of Rs. 45.95 crores on procurement of these MFPs from all over India.

(c) TRIFED procured different coarse grain items under the Price Support Scheme of Government of India during 1989-90. There is no Price Support Scheme yet for items of MFD. TRIFED has however, adopted a policy of uniform price fixation for important MFP items. For these items, TRIFED either directly or through the State Federations, undertakes market intervention operations, in case the prices are below the uniform purchase price.

Statement

MFP—Items

1. Gum Karaya
2. Tamarind
3. Sal Seed
4. Sal DOC
5. Mahuwa Seed
6. Mahuwa Flower
7. *Karanj Seed*
8. Kusum Seed
9. Tendu Leaves
10. Myrobalans
11. Cocoons
12. Stick Lac
13. Medicinal Herbs
14. Chironjee
15. Dry Amla
16. Cleaning Nuts
17. Shikakai
18. Honey
19. Soap Nut
20. Ratanjot
21. Bamboo Ply
22. Cashew Nuts (Raw).

Allotment of funds for tribal sub-plan and special component plan

573. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the Seventh Five Year Plan period, the fund allotted for Tribal Sub-plan and special component plan for Scheduled Castes were not fully and properly utilised by various State Governments and Union Territories;